

# Dover Organization Ordered by Court To Stop Offering Diplomas Until It Cooperates With Investigators

## *DOJ Consumer Protection Unit Cautions Delawareans About Dubious Diploma Services*

Following consumer complaints, an investigation by the Department of Justice Consumer Protection Unit and a lack of response to investigative demands, a state Superior Court judge has held the Bright Rock Christian Academy and its principals in contempt and ordered the organization to stop soliciting, offering, charging for, or attempting to offer or charge for diploma or education services in Delaware until such time as it complies with the investigative demands.

Bright Rock has operated under various names since approximately 2006, including:

- Bertha E. Roach Academy
- Bertha Roach Christian High School
- Bertha Roach Christian School
- Bertha Elizabeth Roach Christian School
- B.E.R. Academy
- B.E.R. Christian High School
- Bright Rock Christian Academy
- The Enlighten Center

Bright Rock's principals include Clifton Maurice Pettyjohn, Derone L. Daniels, Ira D. Roach, III, Charmagne R. Quarles (a/k/a Reya Quarles), and Sonya Yvette Harris.

In the summer of 2016, CPU received complaints from former students of Bright Rock and its affiliates that high school

diplomas obtained from those organizations were not accepted by employers or institutions of higher education. The Consumer Protection Unit (CPU) commenced an investigation in August 2016 and served Bright Rock, its principals, and affiliates with a subpoena, which Bright Rock ignored. CPU then obtained a Civil Investigative Demand (CID) from the Superior Court in April 2017. Bright Rock produced a deficient, incomplete and untimely response to the CID, after which CPU asked the Superior Court for relief to ensure that Bright Rock and its principals and affiliates properly comply with their efforts to further investigate the matter.

On August 4, 2017, the Superior Court issued an order finding Bright Rock, its principals, and affiliates in contempt for failing to respond properly and fully to the CID. The order enjoins Bright Rock, its principals, and affiliates from soliciting, offering, charging for, or attempting to offer or charge for diploma or education services in Delaware, suspends their corporate charter and enjoins them from organizing in any form for the purpose of rendering diploma or education services in Delaware, and assesses fines and penalties. These injunctions and sanctions remain in place until Bright Rock, its principals and affiliates come into compliance with the CID.

This matter was handled for CPU by Assistant Director Gillian Andrews and Chief Special Investigator Alan Rachko.

Any Delawarean seeking to obtain a high school education or other education credential should be sure that the organization or institution they select is legitimate and that the degree, certification, or other credential they obtain will be accepted by the employer or educational institution they seek admission to.

The following are some tips from the DOJ Consumer Protection Unit to check the legitimacy of nonpublic K-12 education services in Delaware:

- Research the nonpublic education organization to see what accreditations or certifications the school possess, including information provided by the U.S. Department of Education;
- Does the nonpublic school have a physical location or is it an online learning organization—online schools will have different accreditations and standards that may not qualify its students for certain employment or higher education;
- Inquire about the nonpublic school's curriculum, and how academic performance is assessed and results reported—legitimate schools may have routine exams and will report a student's performance in a consistent manner;
- An organization or nonpublic school promising a diploma or certificate for a large fee and little, if any, actual academic performance could be a scam and are cautioned against;
- A legitimate nonpublic school will require its students to perform academically and will have consistent means of testing that performance through routine exams or practicums;
- Ask the organization or nonpublic school for information on their alumni status such as top employers or institutions of higher learning that their graduates have been admitted to;
- Ask the employer or institution of higher learning you seek admission to whether a diplomas or certificate from that school will be accepted; and
- The Delaware Department of Education does not endorse, accredit, approve or monitor curriculum for any nonpublic school, or validate any type of credential provided by those schools.

Consumers who believe they may have been scammed can contact the Attorney General's toll-free Consumer Hotline at 1-800-220-5424 or email the Consumer Protection Unit of DOJ at

[consumer.protection@delaware.gov](mailto:consumer.protection@delaware.gov). If the school was an online learning institution, the consumer should also file complaints with the Federal Trade Commission, [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov).